

Parent Handbook

Hollister Methodist Preschool

Facility # 350703360

About Hollister Methodist Preschool

Hollister Methodist Preschool welcomes all children regardless of race, creed or national origin. It operates as a program of the Hollister United Methodist Church and was established in 1971. We are a non-profit organization governed by the Preschool Committee made up of members of the Hollister United Methodist Church. Our preschool offers a play-based program for children 2.9 years through 5 years old, and potty trained, with an emphasis on the social-emotional development of children. We provide a balance of child directed and teacher directed activities, allowing children to grow in confidence, as they attain new skills in their preschool experience.

Mission Statement

To provide children the opportunity for new learning experiences in a safe and caring environment. To see each child as a unique expression of God. To teach the love and acceptance of Christ and to radiate that love throughout our community, to all people and in our care of God's creation.

Preschool Staff

Hollister Methodist Preschool has a professional staff with extensive training in early childhood education and many years of experience working with children and families. The staff is dedicated to meeting the needs of the children by providing a well rounded and comprehensive preschool education.

All programs maintain a child/teacher ratio of approximately 7/1, which is an earmark of a quality program.

All staff have CPR and 1st Aid certification, as well as Mandatory Reporter training.

Staff Communication

The Staff is readily available to discuss any concerns, problems, ideas, or issues involving preschool business. It is best to communicate promptly with the staff regarding any questions or concerns about the preschool environment. We feel it best to address things in an open and honest manner. Parent concerns are extremely important to us and we appreciate you working with us to resolve any issues constructively.

Preschool Calendar

The Preschool has nine-month school calendar, September to May.
The Preschool follows the Hollister School District Calendar, regarding vacation days.
The Calendar is available on the Preschool website.

Arrival and Departure Procedures

Enter through the Preschool gate between 8:50 -9:10.
The gate will be locked at 9:10. Ring the bell on the gate if you arrive late.

Please have your child **wash their hands** in either of the two bathrooms on the entry porch. These bathrooms are not a part of our licensed facility, so parents are required to remain with their child until the child has entered the Preschool Classroom. Parents may assist their child in hanging up their backpacks and putting their snack in their cubby, especially at the start of school, but we anticipate that the children will be able to do these things for themselves rather quickly.

A visual **Health Check** will be done by the greeting staff member. If signs of illness are present, the staff may ask that the child be taken home. *Parents are responsible for keeping a child home when there is any doubt about a child's health. A child that does not feel well enough to participate comfortably in the day's activities needs to remain at home. Please keep children at home if they have: a contagious infection, a fever, vomiting, diarrhea, heavy continuous nasal discharge or a constant cough. A child must be free from all symptoms for 24 hours before returning to the program.*

Masks are optional for children and staff and it is a personal choice that Preschool will support.

Sign In/Out

Parents and/or caregivers **MUST** sign your child in and out each day. A full signature is required (initials only are not acceptable), as well as the time of arrival and time of departure will be available in each classroom. A note area for special instructions (emergency phone numbers for the day, pick-up or health information) will also be available on the Sign In/Out sheet.

At 12:00pm the children will be signed out. *Children will be released only to parents or those adults given specific permission on a pre-arranged basis.

Parents must leave written permission authorizing someone else to pick up their child. A child will never be released to an adult we don't know without express permission of the parents and only when proper identification is provided, such as a Driver's License.

If you will be arriving late to pick up your child, please call the Preschool to let the staff know. Children can become rather anxious when they are the only one left after pick up.

Consistently late pick ups may result in a late pick up fee of \$1 per minute after 12:00

Please send the following items in a backpack everyday:

Snack & Water Bottle

Please provide a small, healthy snack for your child and a water bottle with the child's name clearly marked on it. Suggested snacks are fruit, veggies crackers, raisins, carrot sticks. Please, no puddings, desserts, sugary snacks or drinks. Cold Water will be provided, as needed. We do not heat food that is sent.

Extra Clothing

Please provide a change of clothing in your child's backpack (pants, shirt, underwear, socks and a Pull Up if your child has occasional accidents).

*** Label Everything! Jackets, sweaters, shoes, socks, shirts, and lunchboxes are often alike.**

What to Wear to Preschool?

Clothing

Your child should come to school in **play clothes**. Paints, glue and other materials that the children will be actively exploring may leave stains on their clothing.

Dress your child in layers, as we move between the indoor classroom and outdoor space frequently and ventilate the classroom by opening windows and doors to reduce the spread of germs, weather permitting.

A jacket or hoodie in cold weather should be worn.

Shoes

Athletic shoes with Velcro are highly recommended.

Our playground has tanbark, so sandals, flip flops and footwear that is too loose, or falls off easily is not recommended. Crocs should be worn with socks and have a backstrap.

Classroom Policies

Toys from Home

Please have your child keep their toys at home. This way the children will engage with the materials the teachers have prepared for them.

Sharing

Teachers may plan special sharing days when children can bring items from home and will notify you in advance.

Comfort Items

If your child needs a comfort items to help with the morning transition, please speak to the classroom teacher. Comfort items are always welcome and can be stored in your child's cubby when not needed.

Birthdays

We celebrate children's birthdays at school. We have a special circle time activity and families may choose to bring a special snack and photos to share with the class. Please speak with your child's Teacher to arrange.

Field Trips

Field trips may be as simple as a walk around the neighborhood, or have a more involved destination. General field trip information and guidelines are as follows:

- Parents need to sign a field trip permission slip upon enrollment to allow their child to participate in field trips.
- Parents will be notified ahead of time about any field trips happening in their child's classroom.
- Emergency cards and medical release forms are taken on all field trips.
- Adults will have children specifically assigned to them and will be responsible for them for the duration of the trip.
- Any Field Trips that require transportation by car, is to be provided by the parent.

Tuition Payments

- The regular school year runs from September - May. The first tuition payment is due August 1st of each school year. Thereafter, tuition payments are due by the first of each month, October through May.
- Tuition payments are payable **online** at HollisterMethodist.org.
- **Checks** can be made out to **HUMC** and should be delivered to the Preschool, in an envelope with the Child's name on it.
- **Cash payments are accepted for the exact amount.**
- Tuition payments are considered to be late if not received by the 10th of the month.
- If tuition is not paid by the 10th, the child will not be able to attend until it is paid.
- A \$25 late fee may be applied to the outstanding balance.
- No credits or refunds are given to days unattended.
- A 30 day written notice to withdraw is required.

Fundraising Programs that we hold or may participate in:

All fundraising monies go to supporting ongoing classroom and playground improvements and special events.

See's Candy – We hold a See's Candy Fundraiser in **November**. Buy your Holiday Candy online and have it delivered to your home.

March Madness“Scratch Off “Fundraiser – Each family receives a Scratcher Card that adds up to \$100. Just ask friends & family to scratch 3 spaces and donate the total amount revealed to support Hollister Methodist Preschool. Goal is \$100 per student.
Hollister Methodist Preschool Federal Tax ID Number is: #77-0034899

Discipline Policies

Treating children as individuals and discussing their choices is what we feel works best at Hollister Methodist Preschool. Helping the children learn compassion and understanding for their fellow classmates is our goal. Children will be encouraged to learn problem-solving skills and become self-correcting. They will be given the opportunity to choose alternatives that will enable them to participate in a socially acceptable manner without reinforcing their negative behavior. Staff will use positive enforcement while supervising children, encouraging them to cooperate and continue using appropriate behaviors. Children will be redirected to an alternate activity if their behavior continues to be inappropriate.

If the situation becomes dangerous for anyone involved, then the child will be removed from the situation. The child will be placed quietly to reflect on the situation before discussing the situation again, all while being supervised by a staff member. If the situation continues to be of concern or escalates, the child's parents/guardians will be contacted for pick up.

Physical / corporal punishment is never an option. Communication is key to a strong working relationship between the teachers and parents/guardians. We are more than happy to share any information about your child, how their day went, what they ate, etc. Teacher conferences can be requested at any time during the year by the parent or teacher. Teachers consider their role as being partners in helping children to be secure and happy. One of our goals is to help children manage their feelings and behavior while at school.

Please discuss with your child's Teacher any concerns you have about your child's behavior, or potential behavior issues. This information can be helpful, as the staff can watch for potential triggers or signs that a child may be upset, before it escalates.

Grounds for Dismissal

The preschool reserves the right to dismiss a child from attendance for any reason whatsoever, including, but not limited to, health, lack of adjustment to the preschool setting, behavior that disrupts the cooperative climate of the classroom, abusive parental behavior, or delinquency of the tuition account.

Health and Medication Guidelines

These health guidelines are for the protection of all the children and families of Hollister Methodist Preschool. It is often difficult to tell how sick children are when they do not appear well. Because preschool is the age of the highest incidence of communicable disease, it is impossible to prevent illness completely, especially in a group situation. The spreading of illness and the severity of the illness may be reduced by careful assessment of your child's health each morning. Parents should call the Preschool about any illness your child is experiencing. A teacher will assess each child's health upon arriving at school each day and will discuss any problems with you.

Daily Health Screening

According to State Licensing regulations, our School staff shall be responsible for ensuring that children with obvious symptoms of illness including, but not limited to, fever and vomiting, are not admitted into School that day. At arrival time, the greeting teacher will check in regarding how your child is that day. S/he will also check the child for any signs of illness at that time.

Medication Policy

Because we are a 3 hour program, as a policy, do not give medication during preschool hours. If a special circumstance arises, it can be dealt with on an individual basis.

Exclusion for Illness Policy

Keeping children healthy is a partnership between families, the Preschool, the children themselves, and your medical provider. Some illnesses require exclusion to ensure the ill child's protection, and to protect the other children, families, and staff. Families are expected to observe their children each morning for any signs of illness.

Please contact the Preschool to let us know your child will be staying home for any reason especially in the case of illness.

Reasons to keep a child home:

- The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in our program.
- The child requires more care than we can provide without compromising the other children in the program.
- The illness is any of the specifically diagnosed conditions listed below.

- If your child comes down with a contagious illness, even if it occurs over the weekend, please notify the director as soon as possible. We are required to report to public health and to post an expose notice. Both of these things are done while maintaining complete confidentiality. Examples of reportable illnesses are measles, mumps, rubella, chicken pox, hand, foot mouth, pink eye and head lice

Children must stay home or may be sent home with any of the following symptoms:

- Any COVID-19 symptoms.
 - A Fever or Temperature of 100.1° or greater within the last 48 hours.
 - A Contagious Infection
 - Vomiting
 - Diarrhea
 - A Continuous Heavy Nasal Discharge (yellow or green)
 - A Constant Cough
 - Unexplained Rash
 - Pink Eye
 - Lice or Nits
 - Lethargy or inattentiveness, uncharacteristic behavioral changes such as these are often related to illness.
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- **A child must be free from all symptoms for 24 hours before returning to the program.**
 - **A doctors note will be necessary will for a child to return to Preschool for serious illness, such as a contagious disease.**

Accidents/ Incidents

When minor accidents occur such as scrapes, cuts, or bumps, the staff will provide the necessary first aid and you will be asked to sign an Accident/Incident Report, which will be put in your child's file.

In the event of a more serious accident, we will contact you immediately and perform all other necessary actions. In the case of serious injury, a person trained in First Aid may render appropriate aid, but 911 will be called. Other than minor bumps and scrapes, parents will be called immediately whenever an injury occurs. All of the teachers are certified in emergency pediatric first aid treatment, including CPR for infants and children.

Safety and Emergency Information

Our staff is keenly aware of the importance of a well-supervised and safe environment. It is the parent's responsibility to have a medical release form, as well as an up to date emergency card on file at all times.

In the event of a natural or other kind of disaster and the building is not safe, it may be necessary to evacuate the building. The staff will care for the children at the Preschool until the parents, or other approved adults, arrive. If it is unsafe to remain at the Preschool, we may evacuate to other buildings on the Church property. There may also be a situation where the building is safe enough to occupy, but parents/ guardians cannot get to the school to pick up their children. In this case, we will keep your child at preschool until you arrive or someone on your emergency form arrives. If we evacuate the building, we will leave a sign on the front door, and a message will be sent out to the parents.

Our policies and procedures for Disaster and Emergency Preparedness are posted and updated regularly.

Licensing Agency

The School is licensed by and is accountable to State Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing
111 North Market Street, Suite 300
San Jose, CA 96117
408-277-1286

*The State Licensing Agency may be contacted by parents at any time.
(See above contact information)*

A licensing agent may make unannounced visits at any time; Interview children and staff; Inspect and audit children's, staff and facility files; Observe the physical condition of child(ren), including conditions that could indicate abuse, neglect or inappropriate placement. The Licensee shall make provisions for private interviews with any child(ren) or staff.

The staff of Hollister Methodist Preschool are Mandated Reporters and as such, must report suspected child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services.

Personal Rights – Children and Parents

All parents will receive a copy of the **Admission Agreement, Personal Rights Statement** (children's) and the **Parent's Rights Statement**.

The following forms are required by the Licensing Agency to be kept in the Child's File for review:

- Admission Agreement (signed and dated)
- Personal Rights LIC 613A
- Parent's Rights LIC 995
- Consent for Medical Treatment LIC 627
- Child's Pre-admission Health History/Parent's Report LIC 702
- Identification and Emergency Information LIC 700
- Physician's Report with updated immunization records and TB test

- If applicable, a Needs and Services Plan
- The Preschool has its own forms that we require for entry.

The following Immunizations are required for preschool entry:

3Polio, 4 DTaP, 3 Hep B, 1Varicella

On or after 1st Birthday: 1Hib, 1MMR

(Immunization Records must be submitted prior to attendance)

This Parent Handbook contains the policies and practices at Hollister Methodist Preschool in effect at the time of publication. 9/2023